GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1537
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2001
RELAXATION OF VISA CURBS
SRIKANTA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some countries have relaxed visa curbs for IT software professionals; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including when these were relaxed?

Answer

THE MINISRTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) & (b) As per the information available with the Government, the following countries have relaxed grant of visa for foreign IT software professionals:-

(i) Australia has been gradually relaxing its visa policy since 1996 mainly to attract IT professionals. New initiatives to attract IT professionals were announced on 29 January, 2001.

(ii) Germany has been issuing special Work Permits since 1 August, 2000 subject to certain conditions which allow entry of skilled IT professionals under the `Green Card` scheme.

(iii) Ireland has recently introduced a Work Visa scheme in addition to the existing Work Permit scheme as a fast track for IT professionals which allows entry for two year period whereas Work Permit is issued only for one year.

(iv) Malaysia relaxed visa policy in mid 1998 for IT software professionals who are sponsored by the companies which come under the purview of a `Multimedia Super Corridor`.

(v) Republic of Korea relaxed its visa policy for IT software professionals in November 2000 which introduced a `Gold Card System` which is applicable to professionals with experience of 5 years or more.

(vi) USA has increased the quota for temporary workers (H1B Visa) from 115000 to 195000 from 1 October, 2000. This increase in quota is neither country specific nor job specific but a major portion of such visas are utilized by IT software professionals.